

Message Text

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ACTION COME-00

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 ISO-00 OFA-01 OES-05 AID-05 CIAE-00

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1330

INFO AMEMBASSY MEXICOCITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EFIS, GY

SUBJECT: POTENTIAL SHRIMP EXPORTS TO THE U.S.

REF: STATE 123864

1. 1. FOLLOWING IS RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS POSED PARA FOUR OF
REFTEL:

A. SHRIMP CATCHES IN EARLY 1975 WERE DOWN FROM SAME TIME LAST
YEAR. REASONS GIVEN BY INDUSTRY SOURCES VARY FROM SUBLIME TO
RIDICULOUS. JAPANESE SHRIMPERS BLAME U.S. BOATS, SAYING THEY
ARE TAKING ALL THE LARGEST (MOMMA AND POPPA) SHRIMP THUS DECREASING
REPRODUCTION. U.S. SHRIMPERS HERE BLAME
THE JAPANESE, WHOM THEY SAY HAVE BEEN TAKING TOO MANY SMALL SHRIMP
FOR TOO LONG A PERIOD THUS DIMINISHING POTENTIAL FOR MATURE
CATCHES. EVERYBODY BLAMES THE CUBANS (RELATIVELY SMALL FLEET)
WHO HAVE BEEN FISHING IN THIS AREA SINCE LATE 1973 AND ACCUSED
OF TAKING QUOTE EVERY BLOODY THING UNQUOTE. THERE ARE ALSO OFT-
REPEATED ALLEGATIONS THAT INDIVIDUAL BOAT CAPTAINS ARE ILLEGALLY
SELLING PART OF THEIR CATCHES TO OTHER BOATS FROM BRAZIL AND SURINAM.
ONE SOURCE HAS NOTED THAT CHANGE IN RAINFALL PATTERN MAY HAVE
DISTURBED SHRIMP BREEDING AREAS. ALL AGREE THAT RECOVERY
PERIOD COULD BE FROM FOUR TO FIVE YEARS.

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B. NONE OF THE THREE SHRIMP PROCESSING PLANTS (GEORGETOWN SEAFOODS, GUYANA INDUSTRIAL HOLDINGS, AND OCEANS LTD.) MAINTAINS INVENTORIES AS SUCH. CATCH IS PROCESSED, FLASH FROZEN AND SHIPPED ON FIRST AVAILABLE CARRIER. ONE COMPANY, GEORGETOWN SEAFOODS, HAS FREEZER HOLDING CAPACITY FOR THREE-QUARTER MILLION POUNDS, BUT HAS NEVER HAD TO USE IT AT THAT LEVEL.

C AND D. OUR ESTIMATE OF 1975 LANDINGS IS ELEVEN MILLION POUNDS, ABOUT THE SAME AS LAST YEAR. THIS IS BASED ON LATEST INFORMATION WHICH INDICATES SOME IMPROVEMENT IN GEORGETOWN SEAFOODS LANDINGS. ALTHOUGH LEVEL OF CATCH MAY BE SAME AS LAST YEAR, EXPORTS TO U.S. LIKELY TO BE HIGHER DUE TO MARKET CONDITIONS. WHEREAS LAST YEAR'S EXPORTS TO U.S. WERE ABOUT 55 PERCENT OF TOTAL CATCH, 1975 ESTIMATE IS ABOUT 70 PLUS PERCENT OR PERHAPS EIGHT MILLION POUNDS. ONE SOURCE STATED EVEN JAPANESE ARE SHIPPING TO U.S. RATHER THAN JAPAN. GEORGETOWN SEAFOODS TRADITIONALLY EXPORTS OVER 80 PERCENT OF ITS CATCH TO U.S.; AND GUYANA INDUSTRIAL HOLDINGS SOME 60 PERCENT. THUS, UNLESS LANDINGS FALL OFF DRASTICALLY FOR REMAINDER OF YEAR, CAN EXPECT GUYANA'S SHRIMP EXPORTS TO U.S. TO BE GREATER THAN LAST YEAR'S SIX MILLION POUNDS.
MATTHEWS

NOTE BY OC/T: CORRECT REF BELIEVED TO BE 123684

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